

Driving Force

- Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-12
signed by President George W. Bush August 27, 2004

“Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors” states wide variations in the quality and security of forms of identification used to gain access to secure Federal and other facilities where there is potential for terrorist attacks need to be eliminated. Therefore, it is the policy of the United States to enhance security, increase Government efficiency, reduce identity fraud, and protect personal privacy by establishing a mandatory, Government-wide standard for secure and reliable forms of identification issued by the Federal Government to its employees and contractors (including contractor employees).

As a result of this directive, Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication 201 entitled “Personnel Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors” was issued.

HSPD-12 and FIPS 201 require appropriate investigation and adjudication for reliability prior to issuance of identification for the purpose of gaining physical access to controlled facilities and logical access to controlled information systems.

This standard is effective immediately and per the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, waivers to FIPS are not allowed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

- Q. Why am I being required to submit to a background investigation?
- A. HSPD-12 and FIPS 201 require appropriate investigation and adjudication for reliability prior to issuance of identification for the purpose of gaining physical access to controlled facilities and logical access to controlled information systems.
- Q. I am not a new employee to MSFC; why am I now being investigated?
- A. The minimum level of investigation for issuance of a permanent NASA photo-ID has been established as a National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI). If your previous background investigation does not meet this level or it has been more than 10 years since your previous background investigation, a reinvestigation is required.
- Q. I just recently submitted a NASA Form 531, Name Check Request, and was fingerprinted. Do I need to complete paperwork for another investigation?
- A. Previous investigations conducted by NASA Protective Services may not meet the minimum requirements for HSPD-12 and FIPS 201. The NASA Name Check Request is used as an inter-Agency investigation only and will not be accepted by other Federal Government Agencies.
- Q. The Agency should have all pertinent information and my fingerprints from my previous background investigation. Do I have to supply this information again and be re-fingerprinted?
- A. Yes. Each investigation requires the completion of an appropriate Standard Form and a set of fingerprints.
- Q. Who will be the investigation agency conducting the investigation on me?
- A. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
- Q. Will an OPM investigator interview me?
- A. Yes, there is the possibility of an investigator talking to you. Depending on the level of investigation, an investigator may contact you, your neighbors, or anyone else that you may have listed as a point of contact on your Standard Form.
- Q. How is it determined what level of investigation I need to be investigated to?

- A. If you are a contractor employee, your company management along with the NASA COTR will complete a MSFC Form 4482, "Position Risk Designation for Non-NASA Employees." This evaluation form helps determine your position risk as High, Moderate, or Low. Once your position risk designation has been decided, this will determine the level of investigation needed for the position. Reference NPR 1600.1, Chapter 4, Section 4.5.6 and 4.8 for more information.

If you are a civil service employee, your assigned position description is evaluated by Human Capital. A NASA Form 1722, "Position Designation Record," is used in determining your position risk. Once your position risk designation has been decided, this will determine the level of investigation needed for the position. Reference NPR 1600.1, Chapter 3, Section 3.5 and 3.6.4 for more information.

- Q. How will I know that I need to be investigated?

- A. Once NASA Protective Services receives the approved MSFC Form 4482 from the COTR, Protective Services will research to see if you currently have an investigation in place that will meet or exceeds the investigation requirement. If there is no investigation in place that meet or exceeds, you will be notified in writing by Protective Services and provided with instructions as how to proceed.

Human Capital will be responsible for working all civil service employee actions.

- Q. What is e-QIP?

- A. Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) is a secure Web site that is designed to house all personnel investigation forms. This allows individuals to electronically enter, update, and release their personal investigative data over a secure Internet connection to their sponsoring agency for review, approval, and submission to investigation provider.

- Q. Why is it so important that I use e-QIP?

- A. The system provides convenient, electronic forms for entering, editing, and submitting investigative form data. The system also provides screen-to-screen validation.

- Q. Can I access e-QIP from home or anywhere else a computer is available to me?

- A. Because e-QIP is Web based, you will be able to access the site at anytime. However, you must use a PC with one of the following Web browsers:
- Microsoft Internet Explorer
 - Mozilla
 - Netscape Navigator

Please refer to the e-QIP brochure that will be provided to you for correct Web browser versions and set-up instructions.

NOTE: Macintosh is not compatible with e-QIP.

- Q. Instead of using e-QIP, do I have an option to use a paper version of the Standard Form?
- A. Yes. However, there is no way that you can validate the form. You must type or legibly print your answers in black ink (if your form is not legible, it will not be accepted). All questions on the form must be answered. Any changes made to the form (mark-throughs, crossovers, whiteout, etc.) must be initialed and dated by you.
- Q. How long will it take to complete the Standard Form?
- A. Approximately 1 – 2 hours.
- Q. Will I be able to go in and out of e-QIP? Will e-QIP save my information from session to session?
- A. Yes, e-QIP has an automatic save feature built into the system.
- Q. How will prior and/or current criminal history affect my current employment status?
- A. Per OPM adjudication guidelines, investigative results are reviewed and adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the totality of all circumstances.
- Q. How will prior and/or current credit issues affect my current employment status?
- A. Per OPM adjudication guidelines, investigative results are reviewed and adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the totality of all circumstances.
- Q. Who will have access to my personal information?
- A. Only individuals with a “need-to-know” will have access to investigative information such as NASA Protective Services, OPM personnel, etc.
- Q. Will I be notified when the investigation is completed?
- A. The applicant or employee is not notified of the completion of an investigation unless there is derogatory information reflected. In that case, the individual will be contacted regarding a personal subject interview.

Q. What are the consequences of refusing to submit to a background investigation?

A. As a MSFC new employee, no one shall be issued a permanent NASA photo-ID, granted access to Federal (NASA) centers or facilities, granted access to Federal Information Technology (IT) systems, or Federal information without, at a minimum, the completion of a NACI and a favorable adjudication.

As a MSFC employee, your current access to Federal (NASA) centers or facilities, Federal IT systems, and Federal information will be revoked/suspended until applicant has completed the required Standard Form, fingerprinted, and received a favorable adjudication.

Q. What are the consequences of knowingly falsifying the investigative form?

A. A knowing and willful false statement on an OPM Standard Form can be punished by fine or imprisonment or both. It can also result in the denial or revocation of access to a NASA center or facility.

Q. I do not know the complete street address for a verifier, past residence, past place of employment or school which I attended.

A. It is the responsibility of the applicant or employee to fully complete all portions of a Standard Form. Incomplete forms will be returned.

Q. I have had prior background investigations but can not remember the investigating agency and/or the dates.

A. You will insert "unknown" in the appropriate box.

Q. I don't have a first or middle name. What do I do?

A. Check the "NFN" (no first name) or "NMN" (no middle name) box.

Q. I use my maiden name as my middle name. Why is it unacceptable to use my maiden name as my middle name on the Standard Form?

A. OPM requires the applicant to use their first and middle name given at birth. Should you have been adopted and your name was changed legally, you will use the name shown on your current certified birth certificate.

Q. Would nicknames be considered as "Other Names Used?"

A. Yes. For example if your name is Robert and you are known as Bob, you would record "Bob" into this section of the Standard Form. Other names that should be recorded in this section are maiden names, previous married names, etc.

- Q. What if I am not sure of a date?
- A. Estimate the date (month and year) to the best of your ability and check the “EST” checkbox, indicating that this is an estimated date. Dates will always begin with “Present” and work backward the number of years requested by the Standard Form. All periods of time must be accounted for without breaks.
- Q. I do not know my Selective Service number; how do I answer this question.
- A. MSFC Protective Services Personnel Security can assist you in acquiring this information.
- Q. I do not have contact with my ex-spouse, children, other family members, etc. and do not know their current address.
- A. You will insert “unknown” in all appropriate boxes. At the conclusion of the Standard Form you will be given an opportunity to list explanations regarding responses such as this one.
- Q. I was TDY for a year, however, maintained my local residence; do I need to list my temporary residence?
- A. Yes. Each Standard Form states a specific time frame to cover. All periods and residential locations must be accounted for in the list. The only exception is military duty locations under 90 days. Be sure to indicate the actual physical location of your residence. Do not use a post office box as an address. Do not list a permanent address if you are living at a school address, etc.
- Q. My employer is located out of the state or offsite of the Center. Which address do I provide?
- A. On the Standard Form under the “Employer/Verifier’s Street address,” you will list the out of state or offsite address and list your physical location under the “Street Address of Job Location.”
- Q. I do not know any information regarding my biological mother or father; how do I answer this question?
- A. You will insert “unknown” in all appropriate boxes. At the conclusion of the Standard Form you will be given an opportunity to list explanation regarding responses such as this one.